



At today's meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Molina and her colleagues officially approved the creation of the Legal Exposure Reduction Committee upon receipt of the latest Litigation Cost Report. It revealed an \$11.6 million in the county's legal fees, costs, and payouts during Fiscal Year 2007-2008. However, the report also noted that the county was served with 736 more legal cases than last year—a ten percent increase. This led Molina to conclude that better, more proactive coordination between various county agencies could further reduce the county's legal exposure—and, thus, its legal costs.

In addition to creating the Legal Exposure Reduction Committee, Molina's motion requires that each department head formulate official goals to decrease risk in their respective departments. Also, the county's Chief Executive Officer, Department of Human Resources Director, and County Counsel must develop training for line supervisors on personnel matters—including progressive discipline, documentation, accommodation, and other issues. The committee specifically was directed to:

- Establish annual, countywide, and departmental legal exposure reduction goals;
- Create proactive County Counsel procedures to advise departments on various methods to reduce legal costs;
- Develop and implement specific strategies calculated to prevent future claims and lawsuits by assessing the efficacy of corrective action plans, reviewing management training and implementation of county policies, identifying lessons learned, and discussing areas of potential exposure;
- Provide updated training on new changes in laws and policies for each appropriate department to implement;
- Report annually on their progress and efforts.

"The responsibility to reduce exposure to lawsuits falls on each of us, from the Board of Supervisors to all our county employees," Molina said. "In these difficult economic times, we must be ever more vigilant in protecting the public purse."

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